

THE Pacific Commercial Advertiser

A MORNING PAPER.

WALTER G. SMITH EDITOR

THURSDAY JANUARY 21

LOOKING OUT FOR OURSELVES.

Captain Matson's campaign for steamship monopoly, which brought about such a sudden reversal of the attitude toward the coastwise shipping bill of Honolulu's commercial bodies, easily gets the commercial backing of San Francisco. The Chamber of Commerce of that city, to which the Captain belongs, has cabled the local Chamber, advising it not to act against the coastwise law, and the same matter has been pressed by Senator Perkins. What it all means is that the influential shipping and shipbuilding elements of the San Francisco Chamber, including Senator Perkins, who represents his company, the Pacific Coast Steamship Line, in that body, are working in their own interests as against a proposition framed in behalf of Honolulu—and don't want us to find it out. In other words, with a neat pretence of impartiality, they really ask this city to stop playing its own game so as to play the opposing one of the great metropolitan port. Obviously, Honolulu has been picked out for the Reuben who buys the gold brick and it will be the prize Hayseed of the year if the shipping monopolists, in the guise of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, can play the trick.

We are admonished with the same wisdom which urged Honolulu to make an enemy of the next President of the United States; which induced it to protest against a most useful reform in the Board of Health and to resist the transfer of an Army officer who had been here building harbors so as to assign one who was an expert in building forts—we are admonished by this sort of wisdom to be meek and self-sacrificing in the presence of San Francisco business men lest they do us injury. San Francisco injure its best customer? San Francisco raise its hand against people who are spending ten millions a year in its market and might, if given annoyance, take that trade to Los Angeles or the Sound? San Francisco fight Honolulu? Not on its life. If the commercial bodies of this city started in to turn the tide of our trade away from San Francisco, that city would send a deputation here barefoot to ask for terms. If we did but know it, Honolulu absolutely commands the situation so far as the good will of the metropolitan business interests is concerned.

Even if questions of our own gratitude were involved, who has the larger claim on it—the Roosevelt administration or San Francisco?

The pretence that a policy, favored by the President of the United States and the Republican leaders of Congress—protectionists all, who are doing what they can to pass the shipping subsidy bill—is a deliberate effort to drive the American flag from the sea, is pabulum for fools. The issue is one of simple business, of economic self-preservation, and has nothing to do with the Fourth of July. We are after good sea service, American if possible, foreign if need be. What has happened under the American shipping monopoly in these waters? Very little, indeed, to solve the tourist problems of this port. We have fewer ships to travel in than we had before annexation. Three new ones have been taken off. Two six and eight day tubs constitute our ferry squadron. Instead of waking up and providing ships that nothing could beat, American shipping interests have hung back and let the Japanese, who have no monopoly, forge ahead. The finest and fastest vessels on this course of travel are under a foreign flag and under a free-for-all competitive system. The "flag" monopoly has no ships which would go for more than second-rate passenger boats on the transatlantic route. It is time, as the President points out, for the American shipping interest to rise to its opportunities; and it is provided in the Hawaiian relief bill that, when they do, the exemption given these Islands shall lapse. If the flag wants to gather every Honolulu passenger under its folds and guarantee him a fair chance to come and go, it may do so. If not, then it is but fair to Hawaii to give any or every other flag a chance.

In another column we have taken pains to expose the hypocrisy of the Bulletin in disputing now the very arguments which it used less than two years ago in favor of the suspension of the coastwise shipping law. It is not that the Bulletin is important, except as it reveals the attitude of the one or two men, engaged since the meeting of 1907 in the shipping business, who control its policy. Before these men became the agents of American lines they wanted Honolulu to have freedom from the coastwise fetters—and, of course, the Bulletin did. Now they want the other thing and the Bulletin acquiesces like the trained spaniel that has been told by its master to stand up and bark. For additional proof of how great the change has been in the spirit of the evening paper, it might be well to read the plea made by Mr. Thurston for a suspension of the coastwise law at the Young Hotel meeting of August 8, 1907, and then construe these editorial paragraphs in the Bulletin of August 9—a paper which now describes the friends of the relief measure as criminals and traitors to the flag:

What sort of patriotism is it that hamstring the prosperity of a Territory by refusing to furnish it with sufficient transportation facilities of a certain, definite 'legal' type and in the same breath excludes all our people from the use of the ships of other nations? And this effusion:

Mr. Thurston's talk before Secretary Straus was in such close accord with the well-recognized policy of the Bulletin that the only cause for surprise is that he lets his own paper wander off on such impossible fool tangents.

KONOHI.

The Chinese New Year celebration began at midnight and will continue for some days. Despite its devil-searing noises it is one of the most attractive and sensible celebrations we have. An annual time for debt-paying seems much better than one for running into debt, which is, among numerous people, the curse of our own holiday week. There is also a fine democracy in the Chinese custom of calling upon one another, without choice by cliques, getting acquainted or patching up old difficulties and beginning the new year in a cheerful and brotherly spirit. Deep down in its character the Chinese race is one of the best on earth. It has all the old Ben Franklin virtues and it is for these, rather than its sleepy vices, that it has been persecuted on the Coast. Love of family, thrift, the filial care of parents, tireless industry, patience, sober living, a contempt for violence, courtesy, respect for scholarship and a developed adaptability to western customs of the better sort—these are the rooted traits of the Chinese and of their Manchu congeners. In Hawaii the Chinese have proved an inestimable blessing and the Territory would be the better off for more of them and fewer of another kind. So here is, on their holiday for 1909, a cordial wish for their happiness, prosperity and long life.

Far better, is it for Hawaii to build up its own fleet of American ships under the American flag, ships that will carry our tourists in steadily increasing numbers, than to turn aside and accept as final the ruin of the American merchant marine.—Bulletin.

Honolulu tried it less than two years ago, using its best hustlers, and could not raise money enough to build one ship. Does it propose to repeat this failure in an effort to escape the chance offered to get the services of five first-class liners free?

As stated in this paper a year ago, the Federal government desires to have the National Guard of Hawaii brought up to full regimental strength. It would be well for young men of military tastes, especially those of an element not adequately represented in the ranks, to form additional companies for the first regiment. There is also a way open to recruit a naval reserve battalion, for which a gunboat would no doubt be assigned, as elsewhere, for army use.

The Star, as usual, has got on both sides of the coastwise question and is as happy as old Janus himself.

BOOMING REALTY.

A boom in real estate always kills itself by a too rapid advance of prices. Elsewhere in this paper, Mr. Trent uses his advertising space in showing how fast suburban land "values" have gone up and drawing the inference that they will go much higher. It is doubtful that this is a matter of congratulation from the standpoint of anyone except the middleman; for the moment the top-notch in inflated real estate prices is approached, the buyer grows wary, the owner is left with the greater part of his property on his hands, subject to higher assessments, and the locality ceases to grow. An illustration of this fact may be found in the history of the company which handled the H. E. Cooper tract before Judge Cooper recovered it by foreclosure of mortgage. Prices at the start were eleven cents a square foot and, consequently, there was nothing doing.

Alewa Heights land is near the top notch now. Owing in part to the vast expanse of sloping land upon which it occupies a little corner, the prices realized on the last sale of lots were too great. It is absurd that a lot on Alewa Heights should be sold at College Hills prices—the Heights yet being without rapid transit, fire protection, pavements, sidewalks, and arboreal charm. We do not say this to depreciate the Alewa site. It will someday be a show place; but that day will be rendered far distant by any boom attempt to make prices of suburban lots any higher than they are. Deliberate inflation means a stagnant real estate market; the only way to keep the market active is to let the amount of available land in sight and the connected public improvements regulate values in the natural way and not get into the habit of marking up real estate and getting hysterical over it every time a regiment of soldiers comes here or a few more tourists than usual arrive.

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The offering is large and the assortment splendid, there being three windows full on display. Look these over, each piece is plainly marked with former and sale price.

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\$1.25 Fancies, large assortment, now 75c.
Lt. Blue Crepe de Chine now 75c.
\$1.25 Checks, assorted, now 75c.
\$1.50 Moires, plain colors, \$1.00.
\$1.50 Fancies, large assortment, now \$1.00.
\$1.50 Dotted Foulards now 95c.
\$1.50 Dotted Pongees now 90c.
\$2.00 Satin Striped Taffetas, \$1.25.
\$2.50 Real Pongee, Persian pattern, \$1.50.

\$1.50 Shadow Checked Chiffon, 65c.
\$1.50 Lavender Flowered Chiffon 50c.
\$1.50 Radium Silk, Lt. Blue, \$1.00.
\$2.25 Voile Linon, Lt. Blue, \$1.00.
\$2.50 Figured Radium Silk, \$1.50.
\$2.50 Pink Striped Gauze, \$1.50.
\$4.00 Flowered Silk Crepe, \$2.00.
\$4.00 White Dotted Silk Mull, \$2.00.
\$2.50 Gray Striped Grenadine, \$1.75.
\$3.00 Back Striped Grenadine, \$2.00.
\$5.00 and \$6.00 White Embroidered Mull, \$3.25.

EHLERS

ANNOUNCEMENT

To Users of Electric Lights

Mr. F. H. Poss, illuminating engineer of the Holophane Co., New York, will, on Friday, January 22nd, at 10:30 a. m., at the office of The Hawaiian Electric Company, give a demonstration and short talk on the proper use of electric light, explaining and demonstrating how to double one's illumination without increased cost.

We trust all interested in store and residence lighting will avail themselves of the opportunity here offered.

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